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L'ÉVOLUTION SOCIALE EN BELGIQUE ; ses péripéties au point de vue des Classes Ouvrières. L'Équête Ouvrière de 1886. Par le DR. LE CAMPS. Pp. 309. BRUXELLES. 1890.

In his preface the author states that his work is not based on original investigation, and that it does not pretend to be a profound sociological study. It is intended to be merely an historical sketch of the various phases of the social development of the laboring classes since those classes first had political organization in Belgium, together with a summary of the remedial legislation enacted or proposed at the present time. Ninety sketchy and rather rhetorical pages are given to the historical view extending from the middle ages to the present. The remainder of the work is for the most part a summary of the testimony taken and conclusions reached by a Royal Commission of Enquiry concerning labor which was appointed April 15, 1886.

The author says of this commission that "according to the organic act its mission was very great : a field without limit opened before it for exploration. Nothing essential to the labor problem was foreign to its investigations." In other words, it was something like one of our congressional committees authorized to sit during the recess of Congress and take a bulky lot of testimony on any and all phases of the labor problem, and to listen to all witnesses that present themselves. A *questionnaire* filling six closely printed pages was scattered broadcast over the country, and the commission conducted oral investigations in different parts of the kingdom.

The author devotes seventy-eight pages of his book to extracts from the oral testimony, the rather scrappy selections being arranged according to the places where the testimony was taken. A more usable portion of the work is that, about fifty pages, devoted to the written replies to the questions sent out. These are classified by subjects, and, as already intimated, cover the whole range of the labor problem from the physical characteristics of the laborers themselves to the adulteration of liquors. Then follow abstracts of seventeen papers, each dealing with a special topic, written by different men.

The manner of conducting the investigation foreordained the accumulation of a heterogeneous mass of material, much of it of no special value. An avowed aim of the commission was to listen to all complaints and report them. This was doubtless useful work for the citizens of Belgium; it served to lessen discontent and to awaken active sympathy. But the complaints and plans for reform are very much like those with which students of the labor problem are familiar elsewhere; and as the author elected to reproduce the bulky investigation in miniature rather than to make a study based upon it, the work is of special value only to one specially interested in Belgium itself. The volume contains no statistical tables and no index.

A. G. WARNER.

Washington, D. C.

DER WAREN-TERMINHANDEL; seine Technik und Volkswirtschaftlich Bedeutung. Von DR. CARL JOHANNES FUCHS, Privatdocent an der Universität, Strassburg. Leipzig, 1891.

FEW people not directly concerned in business on Boards of Trade or stock exchanges have any clear conception of the nature of these institutions, while the expression "dealing in futures" to most people means simply gambling in some way to them unknown. In consequence of this prevailing ignorance and false opinion regarding their nature, there has been an outcry against them, and legislation of a crude and mischievous kind has been frequently proposed, though as yet in our country little has been really carried through.

It would be a genuine service if some one in our country would do what Dr. Fuchs in this brief pamphlet, reprinted from Schmoller's "*Jahrbuch*," has done for Germany. He has given a clear, succinct account of the nature and process of growth of such institutions, has shown their significance and importance, not to say necessity, for the business interests of the community, and has made clear their workings in every-day transactions.